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Acting Director of Training

11 February 1959

Chief, Plans and Policy Staff

IG Survey of the Office of Personnel and the
CIA Career Service Program

Your memorandum of 9 February, Subject: IG Survey of the Office of Personnel and the CIA Career Service Program, set forth questions asked the Deputy Directors by the IG and the heads of the operating components for candid expressions of opinion on points listed below. These points are set forth as questions and answers for convenience.

a. What are your views as to the merits of a CIA Career Staff?

It is my opinion that there are few, if any, merits to the Career Staff for its members, since Career Staff membership appears to be a one-way contract. The Agency, on the one hand, attains acceptance of an assignment in any locale, at any time, for any duration; however, there are no advantages in salary, retirement, seniority, or even intangibles that would accrue to a Career Staff member. Some advantages might become available if the membership were more restricted.

b. Should eligibility for membership be more restricted than at present?

Yes. The rank and file occasionally snicker at the membership in the Career Service and believe that anyone who puts in the minimum time will be accepted. As a result the greater percentage of employees of the Agency are members, and therefore there is no drive or aspiration to gain something which is procured only by meeting simple requirements. If the Career Service eligibility were much more rigid and based upon experience and provided suitable benefits, I am certain that employees would be eager to join and develop and maintain status through Career Service.

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c. Is the basic concept of separate Career Services for CIA sound?

I believe so. However, I believe that there should be a Career Service for Foreign and Domestic duty and another for Domestic only. It seems ludicrous to place employees in a position of signing for service anywhere when realistically some will not or should not be sent overseas or even out of Washington. No Career Service should send a large family overseas. To do so brings attention to the unit, commits the Government to heavy expenses, and presents a liability in emergency situations. There are those who are qualified and fully motivated for overseas duty and will perform with distinction, but there are also those who prefer U. S. duty and these too will perform equally well.

There appear to be more panels and boards meeting now than ever before on career activities. The man-hours expended, if added and charged to personnel activity, would be very high and would make the work charged to the Personnel Office run into thousands of man-hours.

d. In terms of intelligent personnel administration, what features of the CIA Career Service Program have been of most assistance to you in exercising your responsibilities?

My answer to this question is given in the narrow framework of my most recent five years as Chief of Station, Taiwan. During that time the Office of Communications appeared to have the most orderly career plan. Generally more than fifty communicators were assigned with their families at all times. Without exception each member of that Career Service was notified, sufficiently far in advance, as to time and location of his next assignment. It helped me in that I was able to schedule reservations, packing, shipping, assignment of housing, handle school problems, and innumerable other admin matters for both the departing member and the arriving one. Moralewise, it had considerable beneficial impact. There were no security drawbacks. Of great importance, it reduced "hall walking" to the satisfactory level of processing time. Personally my own reassignment was handled in a similar manner. I was given three months advance notice and there was a suitable overlap with my successor.

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e. Are you satisfied with present procedures governing the processing of personnel actions through the various Career Service Panels and Boards to effect promotions, rotations and assignments? In what way could these procedures be improved or modified to best meet your particular needs?

I am aware that every facet of a man's background is discussed and reviewed prior to making a recommendation for promotion, rotation, and assignment. The present procedure certainly tends toward completeness and eliminates oversight if the Panel and Board members are well chosen. Since activity in the promotion category has diminished, I can recommend no change in present procedures. However, in the field of rotation and reassignment a constant, continuing effort should be made to perfect a uniform, effective system, (1) to meet Agency needs, and (2) to satisfy the employee's desire for career progress.

f. What would be your main objections, if any, to greater interchange of employees on a rotation basis between DD/P, DD/I and DD/S?

Rotation is highly desirable in certain elements of the organization and neither desirable nor possible in others. We must guard against rotation for rotation's sake. If an analogy can be drawn using a commercial organization as an example, it would be unlikely that a manager would change a sub-office chief if he were producing a profit and if the employee were satisfied with his position. Sometimes in this organization there is a tendency to rotate and keep rotating, and the end result is neither profitable to the Agency nor to the individual so affected. Through usage, a tour in CIA has come to mean a two-year period, whereas in fact this period should be understood as the minimum. In my opinion this Agency derives very little benefit from the assignment of an individual to an overseas station for a period of two years economically, considering the cost of packing and shipping household effects, storage of household effects, transportation of his privately owned automobile to and from the field, travel and per diem for the individual and his dependents. Professionally, it usually requires three or perhaps more months to become oriented to the new assignment,

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and the balance is all too short to become well acquainted with the area, its people, and the problems which are of interest and concern to the Clandestine Services community. I strongly feel that those people selected for a foreign service career in CIA should agree to a tour of two or three years, followed by home leave of thirty days and return to their duty station for an additional two or three years, as deemed necessary to meet operational requirements.

During the last six or seven years we have gone through an extensive rotation program in order to provide field experience for the greatest number of personnel and thus make them more aware of the problems in the field and better able to fill their Washington assignments. It would appear that we should bring this era to an end now or in the very near future and concentrate on a headquarters professional group and a field professional group. This does not imply that a static situation should exist. We are bringing to the organization on a very orderly program qualified young men as part of the JOT Program. These JOT's should be keyed into the rotation system so that an orderly transition takes place through their assignment to headquarters and field billets.

g. Any additional comments pertaining to the program as a whole.

I believe that the Career Council should direct the establishment of a working committee whose members should be qualified to make a study and prepare a retirement program for the consideration of the Career Council. The Career Council, when satisfied that the retirement plan is suitable to meet the diversified personnel assignments of CIA employees, will require that the Office of General Counsel place this proposal in suitable language for presentation and introduction to Congress for approval. To provide more effective reception by key Congressional members, I would further suggest that the Director personally brief selected members of Congress prior to arranging for introduction through regularly established methods.

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